

Initiative for a Healthy Weight

Promoting Healthy Eating and Active Living across the Lifespan

The RI Department of Health's Initiative for a Healthy Weight (IHW) is a CDC-funded program to prevent and reduce overweight and obesity in Rhode Island. Guided by the state plan for obesity prevention, IHW coordinates, supports, and implements activities to promote healthy eating and active living among all Rhode Islanders.

With a focus on sustainable environmental and policy changes, IHW collaborates with a diverse group of partners to increase physical activity, improve nutrition, increase breastfeeding, and reduce screen time in schools, worksites, communities and healthcare settings.

Following the Governor's lead ...

IHW's work is guided by Governor Carcieri's goals to improve nutrition, increase physical activity, and decrease the prevalence of obesity in Rhode Island. Through its focus on worksites, IHW will help achieve the Governor's goal of having Rhode Island designated the first "Well State" in the country. These goals are part of the Governor's Wellness Initiative, a public-private effort to promote healthy lifestyles for all Rhode Islanders.

Supporting the Health Director's priorities ...

IHW has the full support of the RI Department of Health. After assuming his position, Health Director David R. Gifford, MD, MPH, immediately identified childhood obesity as one of his top health priorities. The Director's Childhood Obesity Initiative is an integral component of IHW's efforts to decrease the prevalence of obesity across the lifespan.

Promoting wellness & eliminating health disparities ...

With its placement in the RI Department of Health's Division of Community Health and Equity, IHW coordinates its activities with wellness efforts across the Department and draws upon the Division's expertise to eliminate health disparities in overweight and obesity, physical activity, nutrition, breastfeeding and screen time.

Creating a state-wide infrastructure for obesity prevention ...

IHW is partnering with experts in nutrition, physical activity, breastfeeding, communications, data and surveillance, as well as active individuals in school, worksite, community, and health care settings, to form a Healthy Eating and Active Living Collaborative. Through this collaborative, IHW will work towards its vision of a Rhode Island where safe and healthy communities support healthy eating and active living.

Rhode Island Facts

- 56% of adults are overweight or obese.
- 37% of children and adolescents (ages 6–17) are overweight or at risk of overweight.
- 42% of WIC preschoolers (ages 2–5) are overweight or at risk of overweight.
- 72% of adults do not eat the recommended five fruits and vegetables per day.
- 51% of adults do not exercise regularly.

For more information, contact:

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